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*Spiritual
Exercises*



ST.

IGNATIUS

by
Fathers
Markoe
and Hahn

A Queen's Work Publication

*Frutkin
Hudson*

A MAN TO MATCH THE MOUNTAINS . . .

by John P. Markoe, S.J.

and A. S. Hahn, S.J.

*ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA
ST. IGNATIUS, MICH.*

A SKETCH OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA

FOREWORD

The Queen's Work proudly presents one of the finest short sketches of St. Ignatius Loyola written in recent years. It comes from the combined pens of two distinguished Jesuits.

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THE QUEEN'S WORK

I. The Man

by John P. Markoe, S.J.

Desperate efforts are being made today to conquer space. Our own President is urging the expenditure of fabulous sums of money to give the United States the lead in this race of exploration. In the midst of all this frantic effort to get off the earth, it is refreshing to reflect on a man who, content to face the facts of life on this earth, really did conquer space and landed, not on another planet, but in an entirely different world — heaven. Such a man was Ignatius Loyola.

Ignatius was not always a saint. In his own estimation, in fact, he was pretty much of a scoundrel, which makes him all the more attractive to other scoundrels who are seeking a way out. Although he had a strong faith in God, in his early years he more or less conformed to the lax moral conditions surrounding him. Knighthood still pervaded his part of Spain. Thirsting for worldly honor and glory, he became a dashing caballero. He had a soft spot in his heart for the ladies. He got mixed up in the feudal brawls of the period. In a word, he sowed plenty of wild oats. Then he was struck down by the French at the siege of a border-fortress called Pamplona. Another kind of siege began now, a long siege of intense physical and mental suffering. Just as the French captured his body during the first siege, so, in the second, God captured his whole being, both body and soul.

Carried on a stretcher to his ancestral home, he began to take stock of himself. Spiritual reading, the only kind of reading available, became the medium through which God's grace seeped into his soul. Little by little he began to see what a fool he had been, how he had been guiding himself by false standards, striving for the wrong goals. He clearly saw that in seeking worldly honor and glory, he was not seeking God, his Creator, but merely himself.

The lives of the saints brought him in contact with men of a far different breed, men who strove for a goal far above the one toward which he had been striving. They used means and weapons far different from the dagger and sword with which he used to strut around. The lives of these saints of God offered a direct challenge to Ignatius. He met it bravely, just as he had met that cannon ball at Pamplona. He saw clearly that he would have to change his whole life. He proceeded to do just that. What these men had done, he would do, come count down or bad weather.

So the reorientation of his life began. From now on he was going to live for God, God and nothing else! This resolve took such a firm hold that, before he left his bed of pain, it had already become the one, big, leading ambition of his life. He was utterly sold on it. Nothing else mattered. Nothing else could satisfy him. Living for God became a lodestar that drew him and everything about him towards God. The pull of this lodestar became so strong that it completely killed his interest in everything except what helped him to yield to the pull, what accelerated his motion towards his newly-found goal.

Thus detached from everything that could retard his more perfect service of God, he proceeded to the most difficult of all detachments, detachment from self. As soon as he was able to leave his home, his family, and his friends, he departed for the town of Montserrat.

Here he made a general confession of his whole past life, covering about thirty years. He emerged from that confession, which took him three days to make, with such a loathing and hatred of himself that he could hardly stand the stench. He saw himself as a rotten ulcer. He marvelled that the earth did not open and swallow him, that all creation did not turn against him. Having escaped hell by such a narrow margin, nothing undeserved could happen to him now or in the future, be it humiliation or suffering.

That he was permitted to go on living at all surprised him. He did live on, but life could never be the same. Humbled to the dust by the multiplicity and foulness of his sins, he started a new life on the solid bedrock of humility. The old Ignatius was dead and buried in the mercy of God. All self-complacency vanished.

Emptied of self-love, his soul now had room to receive the inflowing of grace, room for Christ to move in and to take over, to replace the old Ignatius with Himself. The new Ignatius now became a living tabernacle housing the Word made flesh again, this time, by appropriation, the flesh of Ignatius.

With this new life vibrating within him and singing the new song in his heart, Ignatius set out as a penitential beggar to carry out his well-laid plan of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. After a night "vigil of arms" in the shrine of our Lady of Monserrat, he arranged for his side arms to be hung as a votive offering before her statue. He exchanged his noble dress for the rags of a mendicant and, after receiving Christ, his new-found Leader, in Holy Communion, he set out on foot for the Holy Land. It was the Feast of the Annunciation.

His route led him to the village of Manresa. Here circumstances detained him longer than he intended. He followed what, for many years, was to be his way of life: begging his food, lodging where he could, nursing the sick, practicing severe penances and mortifications, speaking of God to all who would listen to him and spending many hours in prayer, meditation and contemplation of the life of Christ. To do this more effectively he retired to a small cave on the outskirts of the town. There he came to realize what a truly marvelous Man Christ was. Much as he had admired the heroic lives of the saints he read at Loyola, they seemed almost to vanish alongside the towering, sublime Saint of Saints.

In this cave near Manresa he relived in his own person the whole earthly life of Christ from its beginning to its end. It stunned him to realize that this Man whom he observed walking around, eating, talking, sleeping, enjoying the company of His friends, living and acting as a human being like himself, was God, the Word made flesh, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. What could be more exciting or more fascinating than to watch God live the life of a man! This vision brought the infinite, the purely spiritual God, his Creator, within his focus. He could now meet God man to man. He could get to know Him personally. He could speak to Him, listen to Him, enjoy His company. All the infinite attributes of the Supreme Being were brought within range of his view. To see them, to appreciate

them, to be inspired, thrilled and moved by them, all he now had to do was to get to know the Man, Christ.

He experienced great joy in getting to know Christ better by contemplating, systematically, step by step, the earthly life of this Man Who was God. He was present in spirit at His Incarnation. He noted the sublime condescension of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity in becoming an embryonic infant in the immaculate womb of His Virgin Mother — “Omnipotence in bonds.” He was present at His miraculous birth and observed its obscurity and poverty. He reverently assisted St. Joseph at the circumcision of the new-born Infant, saw the first shedding of the precious blood, and heard the sacred name of Jesus conferred upon Him. He joined the Holy Family on its flight into Egypt and shared with it the feeling of persecution.

He lived with Christ His hidden life at Nazareth and came to realize how Christ continued that same hidden life within his own soul. The words of Christ: “The kingdom of God is within you” (Lk. 17/21) took on an entirely new meaning for him. He could, by now, taste the divine presence within and found that the Lord was indeed sweet, sweeter than anything he had ever before tasted.

He watched John baptize Christ at the start of His public life and as the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, hovered over Christ, he heard the words of the Heavenly Father: “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased” (Mt. 3/17). He followed Christ into the desert, there to share with Him His solitude, continual prayer, penance, and fasting. He watched Him repulse the assaults of Satan. He joined the crowd which gathered around Jesus as He emerged from the desert to be about His Father’s business. He heard Him call His apostles one by one and with them answered the call he now heard deep down in his own soul: “Come, follow Me. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life” (Mt. 4/19; John 14/6).

So Ignatius began to follow Christ through the events of His public life. He drank in His sublime teaching. “Never has man spoken as this Man” (John 7/46-47). He marvelled at the perfection he observed in his every act, relishing especially His sympathy and tenderness for the poor and afflicted. He watched Him restore sight

to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick. He ate of the multiplied loaves and fishes, saw the winds and the waves obey Him and rejoiced to see the devils cringe and flee before Him. No phase of the public life of Christ escaped Ignatius. He wondered how such kindness, goodness and compassion could engender hatred and opposition. He was fascinated by the skill and ease with which Christ handled His enemies, always confounding those out to bait Him.

Who knows but that, as Ignatius joined the apostles and disciples who accompanied Jesus on His last trip to the Holy City, he conceived the idea of forming his own little company which, later, under his leadership, was to take such an active and heroic part in the campaign of Christ! As St. Mark so simply and beautifully describes that journey: "They were now on their way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was walking on in front of them, and they were in dismay, and those who followed were afraid. And again taking the twelve, He began to tell them what would happen to Him saying, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and will deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and spit upon Him, and scourge Him, and put Him to death; and on the third day He will rise again'" (Mk. 10/32-34).

Ignatius followed his divine Leader into the Holy City and marched with Him straight into the lion's den. He watched Him drive the moneychangers out of the temple and mount the speaker's rostrum to face and rebuke His enemies. Such courage captivated the soldier heart of Ignatius.

Present at the Last Supper, he received Holy Communion spiritually from the hands of our Blessed Lord. He followed Him step by step through His sacred passion, was present during the agony in the garden, watched the betrayal, arrest, and brutal treatment, witnessed the mock trial and condemnation, the bloody scourging, the crowning with thorns. He followed along the way to Calvary, putting himself in the place of Simon of Cyrene and helping the Savior carry His cross.

All this made a terrific impact on the soul of Ignatius, but it was not till he stood at the foot of the cross with Mary that the full force

of these awful events struck home. Then he came to know as never before that Christ was suffering this agonizing death for him, Ignatius Loyola. Crushed with sorrow and compassion, he gazed at that bloody quivering Man nailed to that cross where he himself ought to be, dying by inches out of love for him personally and individually. He turned over in his mind three questions: What have I ever done for Christ in the past? What am I doing for Him now? What ought I to do for Him in the future?

For three long hours Ignatius contemplated that awful, gruesome scene, listening to the greatest, sublimest, most eloquent sermon ever preached on earth, a sermon of very few words but of tremendous action.

There he saw exemplified before his very eyes all the virtues he had ever read about in the lives of the saints, and much more: the perfect orientation of the whole life of Christ to the glory of His heavenly Father and the salvation of man, culminating in this supreme sacrifice, His complete detachment, now raised above the earth itself; the utter humiliation of it all, the infinite God publicly executed with human criminals; the poverty, stripped of everything; the patience, with never a word of complaint; the sublime obedience, even to the death of the cross; but, above all, the tremendous love of Christ for His heavenly Father and for his fellow men, even though they betray and crucify Him. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15/13-14).

As he drank in this sermon from the pulpit of the cross, Ignatius became intoxicated with love for Christ and never sobered up. He knew now what a full, a complete and all-out following of this magnificent Leader could and often does mean. It means, possibly, breaking through the barrier of detachment, of humiliation, of suffering, even of death itself. Christ had broken through this barrier out of love for Ignatius. Ignatius would break through the same barrier out of love for Christ who, from His cross, still called: "Come, follow Me." Soldier that he was, he planted the cross of His crucified Leader firmly in his own soul. Thereafter he sought his joy and happiness in hanging upon it. He had found the pearl of great price and never lost it.

Thrilled by his discovery, he assisted at the burial of his divine Leader and then went to search out the hiding place of the apostles.

He was with them when the startling news of the Resurrection was announced to them and when the risen Savior appeared to them. Now he shared in the ineffable joy of the glorious Christ, triumphant over death, over sin, over Satan. What an overwhelming and tremendous victory! What a total, complete victory!

He watched and studied the risen and glorious Christ during the forty days He spent on earth. He saw Him consoling His apostles and disciples, strengthening their faith and putting the finishing touches on the living organism, His Church, which He was to leave on earth to apply the fruits of the redemption to all mankind. With Mary and the apostles he followed Christ to Mount Olivet where he watched His glorious and triumphant Ascension to heaven, the return of the vicarious Prodigal to His Father's house.

As Ignatius' eyes followed the ascending Christ, his heart went with Him, and his soul echoed the words of St. Paul: "Therefore, if you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above" (Col. 3/1).

Ignatius now joined with Mary and the apostles in making the first of all novenas, a novena to the Holy Spirit. With them he received the promised Paraclete. Enlightened and fortified, he began to dream and to imagine what great things he, too, like the apostles, would do for Christ. "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16/15-16) were words addressed to himself.

During the novena, with his contemplative eyes, Ignatius saw the mystical Christ born under the protective care of His holy Mother Mary. With the descent of the Holy Spirit, the risen and glorious Christ joined Himself, through grace, with Peter, His vicar on earth, and with the other apostles to form a new, embryonic, living organism, His Mystical Body, His Church, to be the instrument to transmit salvation to all.

Ignatius saw the baptism of that new mystical Infant on that first Pentecost. He watched it grow into maturity as others, accepting the preaching of the apostles and their successors and the newly ordained priests, received baptism and thus became new, living cells in the Mystical Body of Christ; new, living branches of the Vine which is Christ. He watched the Vine grow and spread its branches throughout the world. He marvelled to see how the activities of the physical

Christ were spread far and wide through the activities of the mystical Christ. It was as though the vital acts of the physical Christ, His preaching, His teaching, His consoling and curing the halt, the lame and the blind, His forgiving sins, His social calls, even His dying, all these necessarily limited to one time and place, entered the small end of a megaphone to issue from the large end amplified, magnified and spread throughout time and space through Catholic pulpits, schools, hospitals, confessionals, Communions received and Masses offered throughout the world.

The Church was, to Ignatius, the one and same historical, physical Christ that he had come to know and to love, continuing to spread His works of mercy, compassion and love through His Mystical Body, His Church, on a grand world-wide scale. Ignatius' one, big ambition was to participate in this noblest of all campaigns under the standard of his divine Leader

Ignatius translated into action his dream of becoming an apostle for all men. He left Manresa to continue his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, leaving behind him everything except his love for Christ. Like another great apostle of an earlier age, he could truly say: "The things that were gain to me, these, for the sake of Christ, I have counted loss. Nay more, I count everything loss because of the excelling knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as dung that I may gain Christ and be found in Him . . . forgetting what is behind, I strain forward to what is before, I press on towards the goal, to the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3/7-14).

II. The Mountains

by A. S. Hahn, S.J.

The sixty-five years spanned by the life of Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) was an exciting period, adventurous, thrilling, glorious — and tragic. When Ignatius was one year old, Christopher Columbus sailed beyond the western horizon to open the age of explorers. A short time later, Raphael, Michelangelo and Leonardo brought painting and sculpture to new heights of excellence. The Polish priest, Copernicus, pointed to a new era of astronomical study with his theory

of a sun-centered planetary system. The renaissance in literature was in full career. Saints walked the earth — among them, Thomas More, John Fisher, St. Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Cajetan and Philip Neri.

Before Ignatius was thirty, the first waves of the Protestant secession rolled over Germany. It was soon to sweep Scandinavia, Holland, Switzerland, England and Scotland from the unity of the Christian Faith.

Over Europe brooded the ominous dark cloud of the Turkish menace, threatening Western civilization and Christianity itself.

Into an awakened world Ignatius was born in the squat fortress-home of the Loyolas in the Basque region of Northern Spain. Baptized Inigo, he later changed his name to that of the vigorous Christian martyr of post-apostolic days, Ignatius of Antioch.

At the age of 16 he went to the household of Don Juan Velasquez, a close friend of King Ferdinand and a prominent official in the government. Ignatius spent the next ten years in the excitement and whirl of court life. In 1517 he returned to Loyola.

War broke out at this time in neighboring Navarre, long a trouble spot between France and Spain. Ignatius' father had been a soldier in Spain's royal army. Three brothers lost their lives on the battle-fields of Europe. Another joined one of the early expeditions to America. Ignatius offered his services as a free-lance fighter to the leader of the Spanish forces in Navarre.

The troops had already surrendered the town of Pamplona, but the fortress still held out. Ignatius joined the small band defending the citadel. The beleaguered garrison could hold out no longer. All but Ignatius wanted to surrender. His conviction, confidence, and determination prevailed. The defense continued.

During one of the assaults, he fell with severe wounds in both legs. With his fall, Pamplona fell. And with that cannon shot, one career for Ignatius ended, another began. It was May 20, 1521. Ignatius was already thirty years of age.

The French ordered special care taken of the wounded man. He was carried over seventy miles of rough roads to his home at Loyola.

Operations were performed. The bones were set. The pain increased and the danger grew. Ignatius was given the last sacraments. Suddenly in late June, he took a turn for the better. He was soon out of danger — but not out of pain.

Months of waiting and suffering followed. The more badly injured leg did not heal rightly and had to be reset. He recovered slowly. Wishing to pass the time in reading, he asked for books of chivalry. No such books could be found, so a servant brought instead a life of Christ and a book about the saints.

In reading these books, Ignatius came to see that there was another Leader for whom gallant and loyal soldiers fought and died — Christ the Son of God. There were other strongholds to be overpowered, other enemies to be overcome, other battles to be won. Other men, Ignatius now learned as he read, had served “His Sovereign Majesty” as He deserved.

“Why not I?” he asked himself. Under the grace of God, a saint was born.

His new ideas were still vague in his mind. But he formed one plan, quite in the spirit of the time. He would make a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Places. He set out in the early Spring of 1522, mounted on a mule, his wounded leg in bandages.

To prepare for his pilgrimage Ignatius wished first to visit one of Spain’s most famous shrines of Our Lady of Monserrat. He examined his conscience for three days, made his confession on the eve of the Feast of the Annunciation, laid his sword on the altar, and spent the entire night in a prayerful vigil at Our Lady’s shrine. He laid aside his gentleman’s finery and put on the coarse clothes of the pilgrim.

The Cave at Manresa

Along the banks of a stream near the town, Ignatius found a small rocky cave. To this solitude he retired to pray, to practice penance, and to fight the battles of God in his soul.

Humility and penance and prayer are elemental and essential virtues required in every serious and sincere conversion of a soul to God. By his careful general confession Ignatius had turned away from sin. He must also turn to God; and to God he would turn completely.

He spent many days in the cave, and on those days he gave many hours, sometimes as many as seven, to prayer. He practiced severe penances, at times so extreme that he was later to regret his rashness.

During those hours of prayer and solitude, he received many supernatural manifestations and illuminations. Ignatius had to learn to pick a cautious path by prudent and searching self-analysis, by ardent prayer for enlightenment, and by guidance from on high. During those months, Ignatius advanced far in virtue. He was on the way to becoming an accomplished master of prayer and of the spiritual life.

These ten months at Manresa had the most profound influence on the life of Ignatius. Here the important book of "The Spiritual Exercises" was first lived by the saint and at least partially consigned to writing. Here he conceived in first broad outline the idea of a world militia for the conquest of souls for Christ — an idea later to develop, but only in slow detail, into the Society of Jesus.

A new trend now appeared in the activities of Ignatius. He would forsake the solitude of the cave on occasion to converse with others on matters pertaining to their souls, and by informal instruction and exhortation urge them on to a better service of God. Among the practices urged by Ignatius was the frequent reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. This common practice of the early Church had by the time of Ignatius fallen into disuse. No wonder, then, that Ignatius met with opposition, suspicion, and even persecution. He would meet with much more in coming years. But in the light of the teaching and practice of the Church in our times, how right Ignatius was, and how well he understood the spirit of Church!

On Hallowed Ground

After ten months at Manresa, Ignatius went ahead with his plans for a pilgrimage to the Holy Places. He arrived in Jerusalem on September 4 and remained in the Holy Land three weeks. They were days of unspeakable joy and spiritual satisfaction for him as he visited the places hallowed by the footsteps of the Savior. He treasured up in his memory every precious detail of the places he visited. The days passed only too quickly.

Along with the joy and happiness of those days, a great sorrow seeped into the heart of Ignatius. It pained him to see the Holy Places in the hands of the non-believing Turks. He wished to remain among these benighted people, who did not know Him Whose presence and footsteps had made these places sacred. But it was not to be. He could not gain the required approval of the Catholic authorities to remain. He had to leave. Providence was guiding his life in other directions

From the first days of his turn to God, the spiritual outlook of Ignatius was not that of the hermit or the cloistered monk. His was the spirituality of the apostle, reaching out to others and seeking to bring others — even the whole world — to the knowledge and love and service of God. He would seek God, not only in prayer and fasting, but in every action of his day. He united his will to the will of the Father.

Like the apostle Paul, Ignatius would be all things to all men and would bring the message of Christ to high and low, to near and far. For the noble-born, Ignatius was noble by birth. For the poor and lowly, Ignatius made himself a beggar and an outcast by choice. For the educated and the intellectual, Ignatius — ? That brought him face to face with the practical problem of his education: the education he already had, which was meager, and the education he would need, which was much. And he was now 33 years old.

In February or March 1524, Ignatius, not the pilgrim now, but still the poor man and the beggar, returned to Barcelona in Spain to begin the gruelling process of his education. Did he at this time have in mind the priesthood as the goal of his studies? Perhaps; but if so, only vaguely. His plans were still uncertain and indefinite. His present purpose was simply to educate himself.

Ignatius entered the University of Barcelona. Unlike the universities of today, which accept only students of collegiate and graduate rank, the University of Barcelona, and others of the time, ran the full gamut of subjects from the elements of grammar to the summit of theology and canon law. Without much embarrassment — humiliation meant little to Ignatius now, and even less later — he sat with youngsters of grade and high school age, trying to learn Latin and

other elementary subjects which would enable him to pass to higher studies.

University Halls

After two years at Barcelona, Ignatius transferred to the University of Alcala. There he took various and difficult courses in philosophy, theology and the "sciences." In 1526 he went on to the University of Salamanca.

Even during these years of his studies, Ignatius took every opportunity of speaking to others of the love of God, the keeping of the commandments, and the reception of the sacraments. As yet, he had no degree in theology, and so was under constant surveillance by the over-sensitive authorities. His quasi-religious garb and his austere manner of life did not help to allay these suspicions.

He was clapped into jail and brought to trial, but always, on examination, these suspicions and fears proved unfounded. The verdict of "not guilty" always was accompanied by the injunction: "Stop teaching." But, as with the apostles, the charity of Christ pressed him; he could not but speak of the things of God.

Hampered at every turn, Ignatius finally decided to leave Spain and go to France. It was a decision clearly prompted by providence. For in France he was to find his first companions in arms for his new company.

At the University of Paris, where he was to remain almost seven years, he registered officially as a student and began his work towards the usual bachelor's and master's degrees.

Here he had as roommates a fellow Basque, Francis Xavier; and a resident of Savoy, on the border of Italy and France, Peter Faber. The two were later to be among the first companions of Ignatius in his new Society.

Through his years as a student, Ignatius faced the perennial problem of finances. He lived on almost nothing, with the poorest of lodgings and the scantiest food. But even that little became a problem.

Ignatius cherished poverty, for it made him poor with Christ and with Christ's poor. But he was, if anything, a practical and sensible man. He saw that he could not do justice to the demands of his school work. On the suggestion of a friend he decided to interrupt the school year and set aside a month or two each year and spend the time gathering alms in Flanders and on one occasion in England. With supplementary contributions from friends in Spain, he was free to devote his entire time to his studies.

Ignatius now at last began to experience satisfying success in his studies. In January, 1533 he received his bachelor's degree, and about a year later his licentiate or teacher's certificate, a degree somewhat like our M.A., Master of Arts. Immediately the new graduate registered for further studies in the College of the Sorbonne, the most famous of the colleges of the University of Paris, especially noted for its faculties of theology and canon law. But illness again attacked him, and he was forced to discontinue his studies after a short time. Except for a brief stint later in the universities of Bologna and Venice, that was the end of Ignatius' formal schooling

First Companions in Arms

All his life, but especially from the time of his "conversion," Ignatius held a strange fascination for others. Combined with a genial and gentle natural disposition were a native urbanity and courtly manner, a quiet strength and forcefulness, an unselfish interest in others which always sought to help. As a result of his constant and close communion with God, he possessed a solid, practical spirituality which could at the same time reach into the heights of the mystic life. Such a personality could not but exercise a powerful influence on others.

During his years at the universities in Spain, several of his fellow students had at different times lived under Ignatius' guidance and imitated his way of life. But their attachment was not to endure. One after the other dropped away. But, at Paris, Ignatius found in six men the qualities and the character he was seeking, the same generous nature, the same ideals and the same steadfastness of purpose. As with Christ and His first apostles, friend brought friend and contact seemed almost accidental. But Providence was again guiding all.

Francis Xavier, 15 years Ignatius' junior, was his most difficult "catch." The youthful, athletic and brilliant student first looked down in disdain on his plodding, lame and poverty-stricken roommate. Then he came to admire and revere him, and finally to become a follower. He was to become a world-famous missionary, perhaps the most famous of modern times.

Peter Faber, a sensitive, even diffident shepherd from Savoy, was to be the first priest in the little group, and after Ignatius the best exponent of his "Exercises," and finest recruiting agent for Ignatius and his gathering company.

The brilliant theologian, James Laynez, a member of a convert Jewish family, was destined to be the first successor of Ignatius as general of the order. His eighteen-year-old friend and companion, Alphonse Salmeron, had heard about Ignatius before leaving the University of Salamanca. The two decided to move to Paris hoping to find the man that had all Salamanca talking. By one of those "accidents" of Providence, the first man they encountered on their arrival in Paris was the man they were seeking. Ignatius welcomed them and arranged lodgings for the two men. Their gracious host at once captured their hearts and their lasting loyalty.

The handsome and genteel Portuguese, Simon Rodriguez, was at one moment cheerful and exuberant, the next melancholy and restive. He was later to cause Ignatius anxious hours, but he possessed a native bigness of soul and fundamental good will.

Nicholas Bobadilla, a Spaniard, sought Ignatius' help on his arrival at the University. By his courtesy, Ignatius won for himself another companion. This interesting and physically strong man worked hard but worried about his health until long after all his companions had died. He lived to be 81, the last survivor of the original little company around Ignatius.

To these six original and colorful companions four more would still be added before the Company that Ignatius was forming would be officially launched

Sworn into Service

During the months before August 1534, Ignatius and his six companions had often met together to discuss their ideas and ideals and lay plans for the future. It was decided to cement their union

and solemnize their offering to God by formal vows. The day chosen was August 15, significantly a feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. All except Xavier had at various times earlier that year gone through the "Spiritual Exercises," or thirty days' retreat, under Ignatius' guidance. Xavier would make them soon. Their retreat was the finest preparation for their proposed dedication.

In the chapel on Montmartre (the hill of martyrs) on the morning of our Lady's feast, the seven gathered. Peter Faber, the only priest among them, offered Mass, while the others knelt around the altar. After the celebrant's own communion, he turned as usual at communion time and, with the Host in his fingers, said the "Ecce Agnus Dei." Then each of the six in turn pronounced his vows and received Holy Communion. After the other six, Faber faced the altar and pronounced his vows.

The vows they took at this time were chastity, as future priests, poverty, to be practiced after the completion of their studies, and a conditional vow to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, if possible within a year, and remain there to labor for Christ. The vow of obedience would come later. This was the beginning of the Company (or Society) of Jesus.

During the ensuing three years of study, a friend of Faber from Savoy, Father Claude Le Jay; a French parish priest, Paschase Broet; and another French student, Jean Codure, joined the Company.

All nine companions of Ignatius, and he himself, had, by 1536, the degree of Masters of Theology from the University of Paris. They ranged in age from the youngest, Salmeron, 22, to Ignatius, the oldest, 45. Three were priests, Faber, Le Jay and Broet. Four were from Spain, one from Portugal, and four from France. There still remained one to be added to the group.

Consecrated Hands

In their vows at Montmartre, besides chastity and poverty, the little group had vowed that, if circumstances permitted, they would go to the Holy Land, there to live out their life of consecration. In pursuance of this plan, they had agreed they would leave France on January 27, 1537 for Venice, where they would meet Ignatius, who had gone to Spain in the meantime. Together they would embark for

the Holy Land. If, within a year's time, it became impossible to obtain leave or passage for the pilgrimage, they would proceed to Rome and place themselves at the disposition of the Holy Father.

Ignatius, along with the tenth member of the Company, a Spanish priest, James Hoces, met and welcomed them. This winning new member had made the "Exercises" under Ignatius and offered to join the Company for the service of God. His period of service would be brief. He died within a year.

The seven companions, not yet ordained, set about by prayer and by works of zeal among the sick and needy to prepare for the great and holy event of their ordination. On June 24, 1537 Xavier, Laynez, Rodriguez, Bobadilla, Codure and Ignatius were ordained priests. Salmeron was ordained deacon and would be raised to the priesthood some months later, when he reached the required age.

For reasons of his own, Ignatius waited till Christmas of the year 1538 to say his first Mass. The rest of the newly ordained said their first Masses in September. Then they resumed their strenuous ministry among the people in and about Venice, their opportunities for good now greatly enhanced by the powers of their priestly ordination. They were waiting for the opportunity to make use of the permission granted them for their pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Months passed; war between Venice and the Turks still held up their hoped-for pilgrimage. At last they decided to act on the alternative. Ignatius, Faber and Laynez would set out directly for Rome. The rest would gradually work their way in pairs towards the Eternal City, free-lancers in the service of Christ and His Church.

Eight or ten miles north of Rome in a little village, called La Storta, Ignatius and his two friends entered a small chapel to pray. As he prayed, Ignatius received one of the many supernatural manifestations with which he was favored, and one of the most important.

Later Ignatius told his companion, Laynez, that God the Father had imprinted on his heart these words, "I will be propitious to you in Rome."

By this heavenly sign, Ignatius understood that his present work and his future plans were in the hands of God. And this conviction nothing could disturb.

I H S

One other matter was still to be settled. If asked who they were, how would the members of the group answer? Ignatius supplied the answer, and definitely. They would say they were "of the Company of Jesus."

Their use of the holy name in their title would be seriously challenged and objected to. But Ignatius, perhaps because of the vision at La Storta, never doubted that, despite any and all opposition, that name would be retained. Later, members of this Society would be called "Jesuits." The name was first used in derision, but soon became a title of honor. There was as yet no complete organization, yet the organization had a name.

A New Company and its Commander

By Easter 1538, the entire company had reached Rome. It now became evident to them that, in order to render their work and their ideas permanent and stable and to provide for future growth and development, their free-lance activities would have to be abandoned. They would have to organize formally and officially.

During many months they discussed details of the kind of life that would be best for their purposes and their ideals. Ignatius wrote down their ideas and organized them in a brief summary which he calls a "Formula." He was just putting into writing the way of life that he and his companions had been living. Their vow of going to the Holy Land to labor would be replaced by a vow of special obedience to the Holy Father. Ignatius submitted his "Formula" to the Holy See. After preliminary examination, Pope Paul III exclaimed, "The finger of God is here!" After further and closer study, the document was formally and officially approved on September 27, 1540, the date the Jesuits mark as the founding of their order.

The Company, or Society, of Jesus was now officially and corporately constituted in the Church. The constitutions of the new order, however, would not receive their complete and final form for many years still. At this task, Ignatius, with the help of those of his companions who were available in Rome for consultation, would work for the rest of his life.

In this task of compiling the constitutions of his Company, Ignatius applied in his own life a favorite dictum: "Pray as though everything

depends on God; work as though everything depends on yourself." He prayed much, his companions prayed; many Masses were said by all of them; and he and they worked hard and long. For more important points, more prayer and more work. When more or less completed, the constitutions and rules of the Society did but reflect the principles and spirit of the "Exercises," according to which Ignatius himself and all his companions had already been formed.

The first business of the newly formed order was the election of the Superior General of the Company. As was expected, his companions went against Ignatius' strong objections and unanimously elected him the first General in April, 1541.

Then, on April 22, all the members of the group met in the Church of St. Paul Outside the Walls for their first official consecration of themselves as members of the Society according to its present constitutions. Ignatius said the Mass, and the rest assisted, except Hoces, who had died, and Xavier, who was already on the way to the Far East.

The Strategy Outlined

The last fifteen years of his life Ignatius spent at the Jesuit residence and headquarters of the Society in Rome. Direct work for souls, so close to his heart, he had, as general, to leave almost entirely to others. His years were to be spent in endless correspondence, in the tedious details of organization and government, in completing the constitutions and rules of his society, and in solidifying the work he and his companions had begun.

In this work of government, the training and experience of Ignatius, the soldier and military leader, came prominently to the fore. Those arms only and that strategy were to be used which BEST achieved success. And it must be, not the success of a skirmish, but the success of the campaign. It was always a rigid and uncompromising application of the simple but very practical principle of "First things first!", so characteristic of Ignatius.

Thus, the limited forces at his command had to be deployed to the best strategic advantage. Ignatius did not cease to caution his men that they would not always be able to do ALL and undertake EVERYTHING that was asked of them. Out of the multifarious undertakings

offered his little company, a wise and prudent choice would always have to be made. Tasks with promise of more far-reaching results and of greater benefit to the larger number would have to take precedence over less important projects with less promise. It would mean that some tasks would have to be left undone.

Thus, the training and inspiring of men who could be and would be leaders among their fellow men was of first importance. Hence, the constant insistence on education — an education equal to the best, a spirituality above the ordinary, and leadership. For his Company, it was always to be the GREATER glory of God. The history of the Church and the history of his Company have proved the instinct of Ignatius shrewd and true.

"Into The Whole World"

To Ignatius at Rome came calls from all parts of Europe and beyond for the services of his men. Of his first companions, Xavier had gone to India as missionary and papal legate to become the model of a long line of Jesuit missionaries.

Rodriguez went to his native Portugal, where he founded provinces and organized the work of the Society. Peter Faber went to embattled Germany. With him, shortly, was the brilliant Peter Canisius, who was to become a saint and a doctor of the Church and be called "the second apostle of Germany." Le Jay and Bobadilla joined them there. The Pope himself personally sent Salmeron and Broet to Ireland on a special mission, which was rendered unsuccessful by the government of England. When the Council of Trent was summoned, Laynez went as a representative of the Pope. On his return from Ireland, Salmeron joined him. It was a truly illustrious group, that little band of men around Ignatius. Great challenges demanded great men. The catholic revival in the sixteenth century saw Ignatius' band everywhere in the forefront of action.

In his own case, Ignatius had learned by experience the need and value of education for those who would work for souls. He saw that need in the world about him and threw his energies and his manpower into the work of education.

In Rome itself Ignatius organized the Roman and German colleges, seminaries for ecclesiastical students, whence came countless learned

and holy priests to stem the tide of defections from the Church. This work, it has been said, was indeed a stroke of strategic genius.

Nine years before he died, Ignatius opened the first college for lay students in Messina, Sicily. With this first college, the long work of the Jesuits in education was begun. Soon Europe, and even the far-off mission lands, became dotted with Jesuit schools that became more numerous as the years went on. In the New World, the first Jesuit school was opened in Mexico as early as 1573. In a letter to the Fathers opening a college in Prague, Ignatius the General outlined his total plan of campaign. The college was to be the center of a variety of activities directed toward every stratum of society and aimed at "the spiritual improvement of both city and kingdom."

Victory!

In the quiet but busy residence of the Jesuits in Rome, the last years of Ignatius rolled quickly around with their simple joys and their burden of work, suffering and prayer. Daily he grew in holiness and nearness to God, at times in ecstatic union — as when he stood on the little porch of his residence of an evening and lifted his eyes to the stars, and his soul reached into the unmeasured heights beyond to the very God of heaven Himself.

For months Ignatius had been a sick man. His extraordinarily active life gave but little indication of his real condition. His wounded leg had never properly healed and now caused constant pain. Stomach ills brought on and aggravated by penances which, according to his own admission, had at times been excessive, poor and irregular food, especially during the poverty of his student days, physical exhaustion and exposure in all kinds of weather on his many difficult travels, finally broke down a rugged constitution. The final illness came. He died July 31, 1556, at the age of 65.

The Soldier's Manual of Arms

The one thing, which, more than anything else, under the grace of God, "made" Ignatius, was the little book of spiritual exercises which he himself composed at Manresa. Its prosaic and colorless pages are not literature. It is an unadorned handbook or guide book, but a masterpiece of piercing logic, of deepest psychology, and of lofty spirituality. No limits confine the heights to which it can lead. Ac-

according to these "Exercises," Ignatius himself, his first companions, and every Jesuit since were formed.

Ignatius himself always felt that he could do no greater favor than to invite another to go through the "Exercises" in their entirety for thirty days. The members of his Company have always had at heart the work of the "Spiritual Exercises," — the giving of retreats. In recognition of the contribution of St. Ignatius and his "Exercises" in retreat work, Pope Pius XI declared him the heavenly patron of retreats, retreat organizations and retreatants.

The Challenge

Life for Ignatius became a challenge, a challenge to service and sacrifice in a cause — the cause of Christ his Leader. "They have done it; why can't I?" he asked himself on reading the lives of the saints. He met that challenge head on, as a soldier and a lover.

The elements that changed the worldly soldier and the courtier Inigo into Ignatius the saint are simple: giving God first place in life and seeking first and foremost His greater glory; using as the means to this end avoidance of sin, frequent reception of the sacraments, and frequent, fervent and sometimes sustained prayer; personal devotion to Christ and the imitation of His example in the details of daily life; and filial love of the Mother of God with unfailing trust in her.

In the lives of few saints has Mary, the Mother of God, played a more prominent part than in the life of St. Ignatius. Quite fittingly, a favorite activity of his followers has been the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin.

For some, the challenge will be to a life of dedication, dedication of self and one's all, to Christ and Christ's cause in the priesthood or the religious life. For the soul truly and completely dedicated to Christ, it will be the prayer of Ignatius as he prayed at the height of his own self-dedication: "Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will, whatsoever I have and possess."

For all men, as for Ignatius, life is meant to be a challenge.

God grant that, as Ignatius, we may answer the challenge with the courage of a soldier and the love of a saint.

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